160. Certain suggestions for the more efficient protection of public interests through the Legislative Council.

Mr. Krishnan Madhavan (Member, Karunagapalli Taluk), while acknowledging that the expansion of the Legislative Council was, no doubt, a step forward, represented that there ought to be no nominations and that special electorates should be created instead. He regretted the exclusion of too many subjects from the purview of discussion by the Legislative Council and pleaded for the inclusion of topics bearing on railways and seaports and was of the view that the Members should be allowed to move at least recommendatory resolutions on those subjects.

A real grievance to a large section of the population of Travancore was that all the members of a joint family like the Marumakkathayees were not allowed to vote. Only the *thandaper* holder was allowed to vote, as his name alone was on the voters' list. He was but a manager of the joint family property. In suits affecting the properties of such families all the members of the family were being impleaded as parties and all of them had to join in cases of lease executed for a term of more than 12 years. Even the members in enjoyment of separate properties assigned to them for maintenance were not included in the voters' list. Another matter for representation was that, if *pokkuvaravu* was not made, the transferee was not included in the list. If the *pokkuvaravu* was not done, the party excluded could not be blamed, for that was not due to his fault, but should be put down to the negligence of Government Officers. The Member requested that those defects might be removed before the voters' list was passed finally. The Member then dealt with the need for the introduction of responsible government. At present there was a good deal of scrambling for Government appointments which resulted in the creation of a partisan spirit. There was even communal hatred. The Member was of opinion that, if appointments were distributed on the principle of the numerical strength of each community, there would not be this complaint. For effective co-operation among all classes of people, responsible government was essential. The question was asked, whether the people were ripe for it. He answered the question in the affirmative. The training possessed by the people in the affairs of the Legislative Council, the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the Municipal Councils and other similar bodies was sufficient to implant in them correct ideas and ideals in regard to the nature of the task before them and had also given them sufficient experience in the art of self-government. He then referred to the answer given by Government to the interpellation of Mr. John Nidiry in the Legislative Council and added that it had created considerable misgivings in the public mind. It was on account of those misgivings that several Members of the Assembly had taken up responsible government as a subject for representation. The general sense of the Assembly was that every endeavour should be put forth to grant the people responsible government. He also stated that the members of the Executive Council should be elected by the representatives of the people at the Legislative Council.

In conclusion, the Member disapproved of the proposed reduction in the number of Taluks and Magistrate's courts and requested that non-officials might also be associated with the proposed Conference for the discussion of the subject.

Mr. C. K. Krishna Pillai (Member, Mavelikara Taluk) spoke of the introduction and growth of the Legislative Council in Travancore and of the constant changes which culminated in the formation of the Legislative Council under Regulation II of 1097. Even the new Legislative Council did not come up to the aspirations of the people in the matter of responsible government as could be seen from the fact that some of the Members of the Assembly had begun to talk of the administration of the State finance, increased powers to the Assembly, establishment of an Executive Council responsible to the Legislative Council and such other subjects. He thought that the advancement of Travancore in point of education justified the changes proposed but what was wanted immediately was some small change in Regulation II of 1097. The changes suggested were:—

(1) Section 20 which gives unlimited powers of legislation to His Highness the Maha Raja should be so modified as to allow the members of the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Legislative Council the privilege of expressing their opinion before His Highness the Maha Raja gives his assent to any law independently of the Council.

(2) There should be a real non-official majority in the Legislative Council. The so-called non-official majority under the new Regulation, II of 1097, was only nominal, since out of the 35 non-official members only 23 could be said to be truly representative of the people of the country, the others being either nominated by Government or elected by special constituencies.

(3) The Regulation should be so amended as to entrust the Legislative Council with full powers of control over the administration of the State finance.

(4) Section 11 (m) of the Regulation should be so altered as to enable the members of Legislative Council to express their views on the Regulation constituting the Council. This change was important because the Government could not gauge public opinion on the reform of the Legislative Council more satisfactorily than through the Council itself.

161. Necessity for an Executive Council.

Mr. N. K. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) said that it was the unfortunate lot of Travancore to have foreigners as Dewans who, however well-intentioned they be, had not the requisite time to study local conditions and introduce the reforms needed by the people. This defect could be remedied by the creation of an Executive Council responsible to the legislature. The Council should consist of 2 members, the Dewan being the President. The members, preferably also the Dewan, should be responsible to the Legislative Council and vacate office when they lost the confidence of the majority in the Legislative Council. The presence of these representatives of the people in the Executive Council would go a long way to remove the misunderstanding of the people against the Government and convince them of the necessity for any fresh taxes that might have to be imposed upon them.

As regards the financial aspect of the introduction of such a reform, the Member said that the necessary funds could be more than made up by the curtailment of the superior staff in the Secretariat which was overmanned.

Mr. N. Madhavan Nair B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) began by saying that the creation of an Executive Council was the only remedy for the evils obtaining in the present machinery of the administration and that the subject had been engaging the attention of the enlightened public of Travancore for some time past. The chief reason which rendered the creation of the Council imperative was the fact that, according to the present system of administration, the Dewan was overwhelmed with work from all sides, with the result that he was deprived of the time and the leisure necessary to carefully study local problems in their relation to local conditions and do good to the people. The help which the Dewan derived from the officers of the Secretariat was little, as the attention of these officers was mainly directed towards the benefit or the gain which a proposed measure would bring to the Government rather than to its bearing, beneficial or otherwise, on the public at large. Again, it had been the unhappy lot of the State to get foreigners as Dewans for a long time past. Although it was an admitted fact that Travancore was indebted not a little for what she was to-day to the great foresight, sagacity and high order of statesmanship displayed by some of her eminent foreign Dewans, it could not be denied that persons of such calibre and turn of mind were not an ordinary phenomenon in these days. The foreign administrators who came here had to study local conditions and institutional practices to inaugurate useful reforms. but they found little time to do all this work in the midst of their multifarious duties. This heavy concentration of work in the Head of the Administration certainly stood in need of modification. The desired relief could come only from a Council of ministers who would associate with the Dewan and share in his responsibilities of administering the State.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly